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The Activities of Civic Organizations for Municipal Improvement in the United States

A SYMPOSIUM

INTRODUCTION.—THE CO-ORDINATION OF CIVIC EFFORT

By Clinton Rogers Woodruff, Esq.

Two years ago, in an article in "The Annals," entitled, "The Nationalization of Municipal Movements," I described the work of the National Municipal League, the American Society of Municipal Improvement, the League of American Municipalities, the American Park and Outdoor Art Association and of the American League for Civic Improvement, five organizations busily engaged in stimulating and educating public interest in various phases of the municipal problem and in providing ways and means for its solution. The article, after describing the objects and purposes of these bodies, concluded with this paragraph: "The suggestion has been made that there should be a closer co-operation between these several bodies, and perhaps federation, so that any possible duplication of effort may be avoided, at the same time insuring an increase of efficiency and a more complete co-ordination of activity. As several of the organizations appeal to different constituencies and pursue different lines, it is doubtful whether the time is ripe for so radical a step as federation, but the suggestion of a permanent secretary, to serve all five bodies and to be made a centre of municipal endeavor in the United States, is a feasible step which can and should be undertaken without delay."

Much greater progress toward co-ordination of effort and practical co-operation has been accomplished during the intervening two years than was at that time thought possible. The American Park and Outdoor Art Association and the American League for Civic Improvement, which were devoting their attention and energies to substantially similar phases of the civic problem, although approaching them along somewhat different lines, have been merged into one strong organization, under the name of the "American Civic Association." It represents not only the combination or merger of the two older societies, but a new element of influence and activity. Moreover, since the article was written there has been formed a working committee or clearing

house, known as the "Alliance of Civic Organizations," having for its express purpose the bringing into closer communication and co-operation the general organizations interested in municipal and civic affairs. The alliance, although organized a year ago, has only recently begun to take active steps to carry out the purpose of its formation, the first secretary elected having been unable to continue the work.

According to its constitution, the alliance shall be composed of "organizations having for an object the improvement of political, educational, artistic, sanitary, material or moral conditions in American cities." Its purpose is declared to be: "To facilitate the exchange, accumulation and distribution of pertinent information, to promote a more complete understanding and co-operation among its members and to assist them in increasing influence and efficiency and avoiding any unnecessary duplication or overlapping of their respective lines of work." The alliance is controlled and directed by trustees, elected or appointed by the associations belonging to it, each of such associations electing or appointing three trustees. Thus far the organizations represented in the alliance are: The National Municipal League, the League of American Municipalities, the American Civic Association, the Conference of Eastern Public Education Associations and the Architectural League of America. Power is given by the constitution to admit national and general organizations to membership, and to admit local organizations and individuals as associate or contributing members or subscribers, but such local organizations or individuals shall have no voting or governing powers.

One of the duties of the secretary will be to obtain reports and information from each association for transmission to all the members, either in full or in the form of abstracts or summaries or bulletins; another duty will be to prepare and furnish for general publication such information as may accord with and promote the purposes of the alliance. He is also expected to make suggestions as to ways and means for promoting the objects and purposes of the various organizations represented.

From this brief description of the objects and purposes of the alliance, and of the powers of the board of trustees, and of the duties of the secretary, it will be seen that there has been established what amounts, for all practical purposes, to a clearing house for municipal and civic bodies.

The need for such a clearing house must be obvious to the most casual observer. During the decade 1894 to 1904 there was a great multiplication of organizations for municipal and civic reform. Although pursuing various lines of activity, in many instances their efforts overlapped. Duplication was frequent, and only the sincerity of interest on the part of those in charge of the work prevented friction. Just as in banking, clearing houses have become essential, so in the field of civic endeavor a civic clearing house has become essential, and the alliance is the outcome. Just how effectively the alliance will meet the requirements of the situation is yet to be demonstrated, but its secretary, Frederick S. Hall, is a man of resource, deeply interested in the work and thoroughly convinced of its need. Moreover, his connection with the City Club of New York, of which he is the assistant secretary, places him in a position where he can secure the assistance and

co-operation of the various activities which centre in that institution. Altogether a better understanding exists between all the agencies working for local improvement throughout the country as a result of the agitation, which was begun as far back as 1900 by the National Municipal League and continued by the American Park and Outdoor Art Association at its meeting in Boston, in 1902.

"The Annals" article of two years ago was substantially a report prepared for the use of the Executive Committee of the National Municipal League in considering the question of closer relationship with similar bodies. The idea was taken up by the American Park and Outdoor Art Association at its Boston meeting, one whole session being devoted to addresses by representatives of the various bodies. As a result, a committee was appointed which led eventually to the formation of the alliance. At the National Municipal League meeting, held in Detroit in 1903, the subject of the "federation of civic forces" was presented by J. Horace McFarland, representing the American League for Civic Improvement; Charles Mulford Robinson, representing the American Park and Outdoor Art Association; Charles Richardson, representing the National Municipal League, and Charles Carroll Brown, representing the American Society of Municipal Improvement, and the movement formally indorsed and authorized.

As the secretary of the National Municipal League, in his annual review for 1904, entitled, "A Year's Disclosure and Development," said: "Just as the National Municipal League was needed to bring into harmonious and effective co-operation for exchange of opinions and the formulation of plans of those who were and are interested in the highly important political, administrative and educational phases of the municipal problem, so now there is a need for effective co-ordination of all the various bodies at work in various parts of the same field." Another important movement had its genesis at the Boston meeting of the American Park and Outdoor Art Association, and that was the merger of that organization with the American League for Civic Improvement, the final consummation of which is described in the article attached to this paper on the American Civic Association.

"Civic Day" at St. Louis, October 6, 1904, assisted in bringing about not only a clearer understanding of the work of each of the organizations there represented, but a more harmonious co-operation among the workers.

To illustrate what is being done in the way of municipal and civic improvement, the representatives of the various national and general organizations now represented or likely to be represented in the near future in the alliance have been asked to prepare a statement of the scope of their activities and accomplishments. These constitute a most interesting and important exhibit of forward work, and should fill the hearts of those who are giving time, thought and attention to the solution of municipal problems with high hope and encouragement. The past achievements of these bodies and their present prospects justify the expectation that the future will see a very rapid development of enlightened, educated public opinion on municipal questions.

THE NATIONAL MUNICIPAL LEAGUE¹

BY CLINTON ROGERS WOODRUFF, Esq., Secretary.

Organized in May, 1894, the National Municipal League has carefully studied the municipal problem from various points of view. It has striven to arouse a wider and a deeper interest in city affairs among the people of the United States. It has sought to learn the cause of present evils and to suggest ways and means for their correction. Through its annual conferences it enables the workers in behalf of municipal betterment to come into personal touch and exchange views. At the Chicago meeting there was one round table conference of nearly five hours' duration, participated in by forty representatives of leading local bodies. Through its active committees the League has brought together groups of acknowledged experts and public men of experience, who have formulated reports of great value to students and administrators. The constant and increasing use of these reports is the surest test of their value. Through its executive officers the League is in constant touch with local and national movements concerned with municipal questions, supplying literature, answering inquiries, suggesting plans, ways and means, and co-ordinating the forces making for municipal improvement constitute their everyday duties and activities. The volumes published by the League are in continuous use in the libraries, among students, administrators and public-spirited citizens. They constitute a municipal literature of importance and usefulness.

In addition to the annual volumes the League issues occasional literature in the shape of leaflets, pamphlets and newspaper articles which has been influential in creating a more general interest in municipal questions. One series of articles was reproduced in a list of papers with a combined circulation of 3,000,000.

The framework of government of our cities needs readjustment to modern conditions. The movement for charter reform is the result. What should our cities do to meet the new conditions and eliminate the existing evils? The Municipal Program is the answer. It is a substantial volume of 246 pages, published by the Macmillan Company. It represents two years' hard and persistent effort on the part of experts in municipal work. It has been praised by discriminating critics and used by every constitutional convention which has been held since it was published.

Dr. Delos F. Wilcox, author of *The American City*, in an article on the Program thus reviews its use: "It has nowhere been enacted into law as a whole, but its influence has been felt practically everywhere 'under the flag' that charters have been framed, constitutions revised or municipal reform agitated. It was published in full in Honolulu for the benefit of the Hawaiian

¹ The Officers of the National Municipal League for 1904-5 are: President, Charles J. Bonaparte, Baltimore; 1st Vice-President, Charles Richardson, Philadelphia; 2nd Vice-President, Samuel B. Capen, Boston; 3rd Vice-President, Thomas N. Strong, Portland, Oregon; 4th Vice-President, Dr. H. Dickson Bruns, New Orleans, La.; 5th Vice-President, Edmund J. James, University of Illinois, Champaign, Ill.; Secretary, Clinton Rogers Woodruff, North American Building, Philadelphia; Treasurer, George Burnham, Jr., Philadelphia.

Legislature. It was used by the Havana Charter Commission and by the Porto Rican and Philippine Commissions. It has left marked traces in the new constitutions of Virginia and Alabama, and has formed the basis for a sweeping amendment to the Colorado Constitution. The Charter Commission of Portland, Ore., used it. The Charter Revision Commission of New York City adopted some of its provisions. The Duluth and St. Paul charters are in line with it in important respects. It has formed the basis for agitation for charter reform in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Delaware, and doubtless many other states. Its experience in Ohio, however, has been unfortunate. The Municipal Code Commission in that state was at work at the time of the Columbus Conference for Good City Government, at which the program was adopted. Perhaps on account of their proximity, the Commissioners absorbed so many reform ideas that their code was rejected by the Ohio politicians."

The accounts of American cities are, as a rule, as hopelessly complicated and involved as are their charters. In 1900, at Milwaukee, a committee was authorized to report "such methods or systems of municipal accounting and collection of municipal statistics as it may find to be most advisable." How well this committee, which is still at work, has discharged the duties thus assigned to it, may be gathered from the following statement from Professor F. A. Cleveland, of Haskins & Sells, and of the University of the City of New York: "For guidance they have gone to the charters and organic laws. They have also availed themselves of the results of research of political scientists, and of the experience of professional accountants and officers of municipal control. Each result has thus been brought to a critical test. So useful were the schedules of classification thus formulated that, from the date of their first publication, they have been utilized by cities attempting to restate their reports. In fact, the progress of the work of the committee may be traced in the new classification from time to time adopted by municipalities. To-day there are no less than eighty cities whose financial statements bear the stamp of the work of the League; and the United States census officers have made use of them in the collection and classification of municipal statistics. At the last conference of the League it was thought the success of this part of the work of the committee warranted an enlargement of the scope of its labor. The committee was therefore continued and instructed to report in outline a complete system of municipal accounts and reports." The committee is composed of Dr. Edward M. Hartwell, Chairman, City Statistician of Boston and a group of practical accountants, city officials, state examiners and well-known students.

The education of coming generations is essential to steady and substantial improvement. This fact has been fully appreciated by the League and no small part of its work has been devoted to purely educational work. In 1900, at Milwaukee, a committee, with the late President Thomas M. Drown, of Lehigh University, as Chairman, was appointed to inquire as to the amount of instruction given in colleges and universities and to bring the necessity for such instruction to the attention of the authorities in charge of these institutions. Two reports were prepared and sent to every college in the

country. They have stirred up interest. They have supplied outlines, syllabi and practical directions. They have resulted in the introduction of numerous courses. At Detroit, in 1903, a new committee was authorized to carry on the work among the secondary schools of the country, and it is now at work under the chairmanship of Dr. William H. Maxwell, Superintendent of the Schools of New York. The committee is made up of a distinguished group of educators, including college presidents, superintendents and teachers.

Nomination reform is a burning question in every state and city in the Union. How candidates for municipal elective offices shall be nominated is a fundamentally important question. This is the problem the League's committee on the subject, appointed at Boston in 1901, has set itself to study. It is going about its work very much as the Municipal Program Committee did, and equally fruitful results are to be expected. Horace E. Deming, of New York, is Chairman of this committee.

Municipal taxation is closely associated in importance and relative value with the question of uniform accounting and statistics. To supplement the work already done by the League along these lines and to co-ordinate the work done in behalf of improved methods of municipal taxation by various local bodies throughout the country, the League at its Chicago meeting in 1904 authorized a committee "to consider what changes may be necessary and desirable in the constitutions and laws of the various states, and to make a report setting forth the general principles which should govern such amendments." Lawson Purdy, secretary of the New York Tax Reform Association, is chairman of this committee.

At Chicago the appointment of a committee was authorized to include those actually conducting courses in municipal government, to give to each the benefit of the others' experience and to secure greater co-ordination and unity of effort. The work of this committee will supplement the work done by President Drown's committee of two years ago and carry it to a logical and effective conclusion. Professor L. S. Rowe, of the University of Pennsylvania, has been made Chairman of this Committee on the Co-ordination of Instruction in Municipal Government.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENTS²

PROF. A. PRESCOTT FOLWELL, President.

This society was organized in Buffalo, N. Y., September 19, 1894, by about sixty representatives of seventeen cities, who responded to an invitation issued by M. J. Murphy, Street Commissioner of St. Louis, who was elected the first president. The object of the society is stated in the constitution to be "to disseminate information and experience upon, and to

² The Officers of the American Society of Municipal Improvements, 1904-5: President, A. Prescott Folwell, Easton, Pa.; 1st Vice-President, Charles Carroll Brown, Indianapolis, Ind.; and Vice-President, John R. Barlow, Montreal, Canada; 3rd Vice-President, William B. Howe, Concord, N. H.; Secretary, George W. Tillson, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Treasurer, F. J. O'Brien, Oswego, N. Y.; Chairman Finance Committee, Alcide Chausse, Montreal, Canada.

promote the best methods to be employed in, the management of municipal departments and in the construction of municipal works, by means of annual conventions, the reading and discussion of papers upon municipal improvements, and by social and friendly intercourse at such conventions, and to circulate among its members, by means of an annual publication, the information thus obtained."

The society as organized contained twenty-nine (50 per cent.) members of boards of public works, eight (14 per cent.) mayors and councilmen, six (10 per cent.) city engineers, seven (12 per cent.) street and sewer commissioners, and a few others. The following year 34 per cent. of the members were members of boards of public works, 7 per cent. mayors and councilmen, 24 per cent. city engineers, 7 per cent. street and sewer commissioners, 7 per cent. water works officials, and 20 per cent. held other positions. In 1904, 16 per cent. were members of boards of public works, 6 per cent. mayors and councilmen, 22 per cent. city engineers, 19 per cent. other engineers in city service, 7 per cent. street and sewer commissioners, and 11 per cent. water works officials. Its presidents have been in succession a street commissioner, president of board of public works, president of board of administration, member of board of public works, engineer of highways, city engineer, president of board of public improvements, city engineer, city engineer, chairman of water committee and consulting municipal engineer. Canada and most of the States east of the Rockies are represented in the society's membership, and conventions have been held at Buffalo, Cincinnati, Chicago, Nashville, Washington, D. C., Toronto, Milwaukee, Niagara Falls, Rochester, Indianapolis and St. Louis. The next is to be held at Montreal, September 4th to 6th.

The original idea was that municipalities should become members, to be represented by such "engineer, officer or director" of "public or municipal department work" as should choose to join; such individuals to lose their eligibility and membership with their public office. This was found to be cumbersome and inconvenient, the first president losing his membership before the end of his term. Provision was made in 1895 that such might remain as associate members; and in 1900 that they might retain full membership. In the same year it was also made a provision of the constitution that "any person interested in municipal improvements or work as a contractor or contracting agent, or who is a manufacturer or dealer in municipal supplies may become an associate member who shall enjoy all the rights and privileges of full membership excepting that of holding office or voting." One of the advantages of this society has been that it is not composed entirely of engineers or of administrative officers, but that all classes who are interested in the physical improvement of cities exchange views at its conventions. The chief disadvantage under which it originally labored was the brief time for which many of its members retained their eligibility. Five years after its organization, when the above change in the constitution was made, but six of the original members remained; but more than a third of those who were then members are still so, although most of them no longer hold office.

To prevent the work of the society from being confined to one or two narrow channels and to secure proper attention to each of the several more important branches of municipal improvements, there is appointed each year by the president, committees on street paving, electric street lighting, sewerage and sanitation, water works and water supply, taxation and assessments, city government and legislation, disposition of garbage and street cleaning, review, and municipal franchises; while special committees on municipal data and statistics and park development and maintenance have been appointed for several years past. Each of these committees generally presents a report at each convention, and also obtains one or more papers on subjects within its field of activity. These conventions are by no means junketing trips, but are devoted by all members to earnest endeavors to obtain and contribute the greatest amount of benefit possible, through conversation with officials from all parts of the country, inspection of such improvements as the convention city has to show, and papers and discussions—the last frequently more interesting than the papers which occasioned them. Most of the members are men whose business it is to do things and who wish to learn how to do them better.

The extent to which different parts of the field have actually been covered by the society is indicated by the number of reports and papers presented by the various committees. There have been about fifty-five papers (25 per cent.) on street paving, eighteen (7 per cent.) on other street improvements, thirty-five (16 per cent.) on water works, thirty (14 per cent.) on sewerage, fifteen (7 per cent.) on garbage disposal and street cleaning, twelve (6 per cent.) on taxation and assessments, ten (5 per cent.) on street lighting, nine (4 per cent.) on health, eight (4 per cent.) on legislative subjects, six (3 per cent.) on parks, and twenty miscellaneous. Of the good accomplished by the society, the greater part cannot be designated specifically since it consists of the improved usefulness of its members to their municipalities both as officials and as citizens. The writer has in mind instances, however, of improvements in street paving and repair, in street lighting and in garbage disposal in certain cities which were the direct result of these meetings; and undoubtedly others could be learned of in every branch of municipal activity. Uniformity of municipal statistics, so longed for by every collector of municipal data for whatsoever purpose, has been greatly promoted by this society. In all branches the aim has been not so much to deal with such technical details as might better be considered by an engineering society and would differ with local conditions as to discuss the broader principles of more general application, and along this line it believes it can perform and is performing a work of great and permanent benefit to American municipalities.

LEAGUE OF AMERICAN MUNICIPALITIES*

BY THE HON. JOHN MACVICAR, Secretary.

The objects of the organization known as the League of American Municipalities are:—

"The general improvement and facilitation of every branch of municipal administration by the following means: First, the perpetuation of the organization as an agency for the co-operation of American cities in the practical study of all questions pertaining to municipal administration; second, the holding of annual conventions for the discussion of contemporaneous municipal affairs; third, the establishment and maintenance of a central bureau of information for the collection and compilation and dissemination of statistics, reports of all kinds of information relative to municipal government."

It owes its origin to a call, signed by fifty mayors, headed by Samuel L. Black, then mayor of Columbus. In this call it was set forth that the purpose of the organization to be formed would be the "general improvement and facilitation of every branch of municipal administration, through the means of an interchange of experience and ideas of the city officials of the country." It was further stated that "true municipal reform must necessarily come from the work of those actually engaged in the duties of municipal administration, from a discussion of municipal problems by the men who are actually in the work and know its conditions." More than 1200 officials, representing about 150 cities, attended the first convention held at Columbus, Ohio, in September, 1897. Among those who figured prominently in the deliberations of this organization convention was the late Mayor Samuel M. Jones, of Toledo. In the constitution adopted, the objects of the league were clearly expressed in the words of the introductory paragraph of this article. The present secretary of the league was its first president. He was then mayor of Des Moines, Iowa. His successors in the presidential office have been Mayor Samuel L. Black, of Columbus; Mayor Henry V. Johnson, of Denver, Col.; Mayor J. A. Johnson, of Fargo, N. D.; Mayor Charles S. Ashley, of New Bedford, Mass.; Mayor J. Adger Smyth, of Charleston, S. C.; Mayor James M. Head, of Nashville, Tenn., and the present incumbent, Mayor William C. Crolius, of Joliet, Ill.

Among the well-known men who have been active in the work of the league, some as officers and others as members, are: James D. Phelan, who, for two terms, was mayor of San Francisco, and accomplished such remarkable reforms in that municipality; Samuel M. Jones, known the world

* The Officers of the League for 1904-5 are: President, William C. Crolius, Mayor of Joliet, Ill.; 1st Vice-President, R. G. Rhett, Mayor of Charleston, S. C.; 2nd Vice-President, George Stewart Brown, Councilman of Baltimore, Md.; 3rd Vice-President, J. E. McCafferty, Councilman of Wilmington, Del.; Treasurer, William D. Morgan, Mayor of Georgetown, S. C.; Secretary, John MacVicar, Des Moines, Ia.; Trustees, Henry Bohl, President of the Board of Public Service of Columbus, O.; W. H. Baker, Mayor of Lockport, N. Y.; Louis Betz, Comptroller of St. Paul, Minn.; W. M. Drennen, Mayor of Birmingham, Ala.; M. A. Blouse, Mayor of Kokomo, Ind.; and Silas Cook, Mayor of East St. Louis, Ill.

over as "the Golden Rule" mayor of Toledo; Charles S. Ashley, who has the distinction of having been elected mayor of New Bedford, Mass., for fifteen successive terms; Josiah Quincy, rated as one of the best mayors Boston ever had; Carter H. Harrison, mayor of Chicago, and a prominent figure in national politics; the late Hazen S. Pingree, former mayor of Detroit, and later governor of Michigan; Thomas G. Hayes, whose work as mayor of Baltimore attracted widespread attention. The annual conventions of the league have been held in the following named cities: 1897, Columbus, O.; 1898, Detroit, Mich.; 1899, Syracuse, N. Y.; 1900, Charleston, S. C.; 1901, Jamestown, N. Y.; 1902, Grand Rapids, Mich.; 1903, Baltimore, Md.; 1904, St. Louis. Immediately after its organization the League of American Municipalities established a permanent bureau of information, in charge of the secretary. It is through this bureau that the organization does its most important and effective work, for this is the central office through which the interchange of experience and ideas is carried on all of the time. The work of the bureau is to collect and compile statistics, reports and all kinds of information relative to municipal government, and to answer all inquiries from officials of membership cities. Any member of the league may, at any time, call upon this bureau for information, and here he will find probably the most complete collection of municipal statements and reports in the United States. If the bureau has a call for any particular information which it has not on file it proceeds to secure that information. Nearly all of the regular and special reports of municipal departments and commissions throughout the country are promptly sent to this bureau of information, and the secretary and his assistant are constantly making special investigations and reports.

As a great part of the information collected by the Bureau of Information is of general interest to the league members, the executive committee several months ago decided to establish a regular monthly publication to be sent to all of the officials of membership cities. The first number of this publication, which is known as the *Bulletin of the League of American Municipalities*, appeared in September of the past year, and is a neatly printed 32-page magazine, and every issue contains a number of reports and articles of interest and value to city officials.

Through the assistance given by the league, the city of Baltimore enjoyed a great improvement in every one of its municipal departments during the administration of Mayor Thomas G. Hayes. Along toward the close of his remarkable administration Mayor Hayes, in a public speech, said: "I feel that if there has been any improvement in the administration of the government of the city of Baltimore, the League of American Municipalities is entitled to the credit for it, for I got my ideas from this league."

Hon. Henry Bohl, president of the Board of Public Service of Columbus, gives this evidence: "In the great work of improving our public water supply, our street lighting system, and our sewerage system, in which we are investing upwards of \$4,000,000, the League of American Municipalities has given us very valuable aid. At many stages of the work we have been able

to secure from the league information that has enabled us to plan better and save money."

The league is not a reform organization in the generally accepted meaning of the term. It is not committed for or against municipal ownership of public utilities or to any other definite policy, aiming only to collect and disseminate information in a reliable and impartial manner, to the end that the municipal official may be aided in intelligently performing the functions of his office. Membership in the league is held in the name of the cities, and the privileges of membership run to all of the individual officials of membership cities. At the present time nearly every city of importance in the United States and Canada is a member of the organization.

THE AMERICAN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

At the Boston meeting of the American Park and Outdoor Art Association, in August, 1902, a committee was appointed to consider the question of a closer affiliation and a possible merger with the American League for Civic Improvement. The latter, at its meeting at St. Paul, a few weeks later, took similar action. The two committees thus authorized met in joint session, discussed the whole question in all its phases, and reached the conclusion that merger was desirable and feasible. There were a great many interests involved, requiring thoughtful and careful consideration. The two committees reported to their respective bodies in 1903 their conclusions—that steps should be taken looking toward the consummation of the desired merger, but that final action should be postponed for another year, to assure harmonious, unanimous and effective action. The committees were enlarged by the addition of two members each, and the enlarged committees held a joint session in New York late in September, 1903. The action of this joint meeting was unanimously in favor of bringing about the merger of the two bodies at the meetings to be held by them in 1904, and further recommended: First, that the 1904 meetings of the two bodies be held jointly in St. Louis; second, that such publications as could be jointly issued should be so issued until the merger was actually accomplished; third, that there should be every possible interchange of courtesy and co-operation during the same period.

The American Park and Outdoor Art Association held a meeting on June 9, 1904, at St. Louis, at which the report of its committee was re-

⁴ The Officers of the American Civic Association for 1904-5 are: President, J. Horace McFarland, Harrisburg, Pa.; 1st Vice-President, Clinton Rogers Woodruff, Philadelphia; Treasurer, William B. Howland, New York; General Vice-Presidents, George Foster Peabody, New York, Franklin MacVeagh, Chicago; Department Officers: Women's Outdoor Art League, Mrs. Chas. F. Millspau, Chicago; Parks and Public Reservations, G. A. Parker, Hartford, Conn.; Arts and Crafts, Mrs. M. F. Johnston, Richmond, Ind.; Children's Gardens, Dick J. Crosby, Washington; City Making, Frederick S. Lamb, New York; Outdoor Art, Warren H. Manning, Boston; Factory Betterment, Edwin L. Shuey, Dayton, Ohio; Libraries, Frank M. Crunden, St. Louis; Public Nuisances, Fred'k Law Olmstead, Brookline, Mass.; Public Recreation, Joseph Lee, Boston; Railroad Improvement, Mrs. A. E. McCrea, Chicago; Rural Improvements, O. C. Simonds, Chicago; School Extension, Charles Zueblin, Chicago; Press, Frank Chapin Bray, Chicago; Social Settlements, Mrs. Conde Hamlin, St. Paul.

ceived and approved, and liquidating trustees were appointed to carry out the recommendations of the committee. President Woodruff, of the association, appointed Warren H. Manning, of Boston; Charles Mulford Robinson, of Rochester; and Mrs. Charles F. Millsbaugh, of Chicago, as the association's trustees.

The American League for Civic Improvement held a meeting on the afternoon of June 9th, received and approved the report of its committee, and authorized the appointment of trustees to carry out the recommendations of the committee. President McFarland was made a trustee by direct vote of the league, and he appointed as his colleagues Mrs. William Christian, of Houston, Tex., and Clinton Rogers Woodruff, of Philadelphia. These trustees were authorized to adopt a name, to draft a constitution and a set of by-laws, and to select the officers to carry them into force and effect. On June 10, the two groups of trustees met in joint session, and in a prolonged meeting unanimously agreed upon a name, a constitution and by-laws, and a list of officers. The constitution and by-laws and the list of officers were submitted to a joint meeting of the association, and the league, on June 11, and by that joint meeting, unanimously approved, and thus merger under the name of the American Civic Association was formally effected.

The purpose of the new association thus formed was declared to be "the cultivation of higher ideals of civic life and beauty in America, the promotion of city, town and neighborhood improvement, the preservation and development of landscape, and the advancement of outdoor art."

A recent article on the work of the association made the following comment on the association and its work: "The observation of the Biblical writer that 'of the making of books there is no end,' is of equal force when applied to the making of organizations for the promotion of public good. Organized effort has so multiplied that the average man has been confused and burdened by the appeals for assistance and support which it makes. The man who makes one organization flourish where two grew before deserves to rank as a public benefactor; therefore, to twist somewhat the philosopher's reference to the propagation of grass: An organization which represents the consolidation of two organizations by the same token should have an especial appeal to the American public; and such a body is found in the American Civic Association. This association marks a distinct epoch in American development—the coming of the time when the reign of the almighty dollar is to be disputed by the love of beauty, which has heretofore remained dormant in the hearts of our people. For some years there were two bodies working in this field. That these organizations were able to live, with the names they bore, was a wonderful testimony to the vitality of the idea on which they were founded. A consolidation was effected at a joint meeting in St. Louis last spring. The American Civic Association, the result of this merger, represents about four hundred and eighty local improvement organizations."

The association proposes to agitate constantly the improvement in appearance of cities, towns, villages, farms and roadsides, and to bring a steady and direct influence to bear so that its force may be expended in a way to secure results. While much of the improvement sought can be ac-

complished only by the public authorities, as, for instance, improvement in the architecture of public buildings, the creation of civic centers, the acquisition of systems of parks, connected by parkways, yet the association urges action by individuals looking to improvement in the architecture of individual homes, the making of attractive back yards, as well as front yards, the general location of flower boxes at windows, particularly by contiguous householders, and the adoption of other similar ideas that are equally important. The association insists positively upon the æsthetic possibilities of railroad lines. It stands for the removal of artificial creations that destroy what there is of natural beauty, and particularly for the checking of obnoxious public advertising. It recognizes that the greatest improvement in a city can be made in the locality where there is the greatest ugliness and most disease-breeding squalor. The true beauty of a city depends on its worst locality as much as its best. The association's work has been divided into the following various departments: Women's Outdoor Art League, Parks, Arts and Crafts, Children's Gardens, City Making, Outdoor Art, Factory Betterment, Libraries, Public Nuisances, Public Recreation, Railroad Improvements, School Extension, Social Settlements, and the Press.

A number of short bulletins are being prepared on the general lines of the bulletins already issued which described the formation and resources of the association, also a series of department reports and pamphlets. It is being quickly realized that a body commanding the services of such men as Frederick Law Olmsted, G. A. Parker, Frederick S. Lamb, Warren H. Manning, O. C. Simonds, and a number of others who are actually writing the bulletins and reports of the association, is an organization which offers the fullest return for the membership dues and the efforts expended. The affiliated organizations pay a minimum of two dollars a year. The work is just beginning. The first object is to secure the co-operation of the 2300 local organizations that have been formed in the last few years throughout the country, and to obtain a large individual membership, so that every opportunity that presents itself may be accepted without fear of lack of funds. The association is carrying out an educational campaign through bulletins, leaflets, pamphlets, and a press bureau. Moreover, it is serving as a source of information and inspiration to workers all over the country, and to those seeking light. It is a clearing house for ideas, and through its departments is accumulating a mass of information and experience that will be of increasing value with each succeeding year.

THE AIMS AND WORK OF THE CONFERENCE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS⁵

By MRS. WILLIAM E. D. SCOTT, Secretary

The state is looked to as the proper conservator of public education, and it is believed that the elaborate system which has been developed for

⁵ Secretary, Conference of Eastern Public Education Associations.

the training of youth from the kindergarten through the university is wisely given over to its control. Like all other branches of our government, however, the successful administration of the public school system is largely dependent on interested and intelligent public opinion. Born of this necessity, the organizations variously known as public education associations, school associations, educational unions, and the committees on education, of clubs devoted to social betterment, have come into existence, and though working to the same end, widely differ in the exercise of their functions.

Until 1898 the few existing societies in the Eastern United States had known but little of each other, but in the spring of that year they came together at the call of the Public Education Association of New York and held an "experience meeting." The educational organizations of Boston, Brookline, New Haven, New York, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Yonkers, and Philadelphia sent delegates; the Association of Collegiate Alumnae was also represented. Papers were read, much discussion followed, the societies were stimulated to new effort; it was decided to form a permanent association, and the following year, at a meeting held in Philadelphia, under the auspices of the Civic Club, the "Conference of Eastern Public Education Associations" came into permanent existence.

Since 1899 the conference has met successively in Brookline, Newark, Baltimore, New Haven, and again in Philadelphia in 1904. While still giving place to reports of new work undertaken, each year some stimulating and suggestive expert opinion on a topic of special interest is provided for. To quote the secretary of the Philadelphia association, "the workers in these associations have recognized from the start that they are not educators, but only promoters; not persons speaking with the authority of experience, but modest representatives of the American public—representative in their belief in the value of education as in nothing else in this country, and striving to know from experts what is most worth promoting." The subjects considered follow: "The School as a Center of Neighborhood Life," "The Work of City and Village Education Societies," "The Value and Methods of Nature Study," "The School House as an Object Lesson in Utility and Beauty," with "School Architecture," "School Sanitation," "School Decoration," "School and Home Gardens" as sub-divisions; "School Hygiene" with the sub-topics "Medical Inspection of Schools," "Nurses in the Schools," "Play-ground Education," "Play Centers," "School Lighting," "Janitor Service." At the last meeting of the conference, in Philadelphia, the topic discussed was "The Relation of the Parent to the Child"; the importance of co-operation between home and school was urged by both teacher and parents who took part in the discussion; several well-known medical specialists of Philadelphia spoke on "The Physical Care of Children," indicated the physical defects so often overlooked, and explained the importance to the child of having the teacher notice and the parents give attention to these defects. "The Nose, Throat, and Ears," "The Eyes," "Deformities," and "General Hygiene" were the special topics presented, and in the discussion that followed many cases were related by teachers in which improved school work resulted from this co-operation between teacher and parent. A morning

was left free for the delegates to visit points of educational interest in Philadelphia, a classified list of which was given in the program. The medical inspection of schools and the two school gardens opened last year, under capable instructors, attracted particular notice. The Public Education Association has been the active force in securing the introduction into the public school system of both these important innovations.

The record of the year of the thirty affiliated societies showed increasing interest and opportunity. One may be given as fairly indicative of the spirit of all.

President M. Carey Thomas, of Bryn Mawr College, reported on the educational work of the Collegiate Alumnae, whose membership comprises three thousand women, and is representative of twenty-three colleges. In its various branches throughout the country the questions of school administration, school sanitation, the trained supervision of rural schools, better salaries for rural teachers, juvenile delinquency, compulsory education, are receiving attention; and the Collegiate Alumnae are in many places working in co-operation with other organizations of women. A strong movement has been started to secure the service of college graduates in our elementary schools, and thus ensure the degree of culture and training especially demanded of those who would reach the minds and hearts of little children. A few special spheres of usefulness which have borne the test of experience may serve as a guide to other workers: Nature study committees in cities can bring the country to children, many of whom have never seen a dandelion in bloom, by means of ferns, shrubs, and flowering plants, and branches of trees obtained from parks and country, exhibited in public school at "Flower Shows" in spring and autumn. These shows in New York, in which the Public Education Association takes part, are of such regular occurrence that the Board of Education has had special tables made which are sent from school to school to be used as needed.

The Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Rochester, N. Y., has also made its "Flower Show" an annual fact, and has done much for the improvement of school grounds. Co-operation with the Home Gardening Association of Cleveland, O., has been sought by many of the societies, and its methods followed. This association furnishes penny packages of seeds, with particular directions as to their care, and in 1904 distributed 181,000 packages to Cleveland school children and 75,000 packages to outside associations. So great has been the demand for the seeds that this year a much larger supply has been secured to meet the increasing calls of the schools and civic improvement associations in other cities. "Art committees" provide pictures, casts, and other decorative material for the schools. "Picture circulating committees" furnish groups of simply framed pictures, which are loaned to schools, and distributed by the teachers among the children, who take them to their homes, keep them for a week, and then exchange them for other pictures. "Portfolio committees" make use of pictures from magazines and of Perry and Cosmos pictures, which they mount on cardboard and supply to the schools as illustrative material. Twenty thousand and sixty-seven small unframed pictures, costing \$651.86, have been distributed

to 188 schools in the past six years by the portfolio committee of the New York Public Education Association. Music committees offer young people's concerts, organ recitals, open air concerts, and in New York recently gave a series of Sunday afternoon concerts in a public school building.

The City History Club of New York City, by means of its classes and excursions, has been instrumental in giving to large numbers of public school children a knowledge of local history. The club has a valuable collection of lantern slides available for exchange with other cities. A bulletin on school hygiene, embodying the valuable papers presented on that subject at its annual meetings, has been published by the conference, and may be had on application to the secretary. At the invitation of the Education Association of Richmond, Va., the conference of 1905 will be held in Richmond, where it will unite forces with the earnest body of men and women who are working to extend the influence and efficiency of the common schools of Virginia.

Local Civic Organizations

NEW YORK*

1. THE CITY CLUB.
2. THE NEW YORK CIVIL SERVICE REFORM ASSOCIATION.
3. THE MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK.
4. THE MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY.
5. THE TRANSIT REFORM COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED.
6. THE WEST END ASSOCIATION.
7. THE BROOKLYN LEAGUE.

By FREDERICK S. HALL, Assistant Secretary, City Club, New York.

New York is well organized along civic lines. Many of the organizations are temporary in their character and pass out of existence as soon as the objects for which the organizations were formed have been attained. There are, however, a score or more organizations of a more permanent character working in fields which, although overlapping somewhat, are in the main exclusive of each other. In addition to these organizations, whose activity extends to all parts of the Greater City, there are over fifty organiza-

* For the facts included in this article in regard to the work of the civic organizations mentioned, I am indebted to the following gentlemen: Elliot H. Goodwin, Secretary of the Civil Service Reform Association; S. C. Mead, Secretary of the Merchants' Association; Calvin Tomkins, President of the Municipal Art Society; James S. Lehmaier, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Transit Reform Committee of 100; John B. Creighton, Secretary of the Brooklyn League and George B. Sheppard, Secretary of the West End Association.

tions devoted to the interests of particular districts of the city. These are called by various names, but more often are known simply as "Boards of Trade" of the particular districts. They are, however, active politically on all questions pertaining to their particular districts.

The past year has been one of unusual activity among all of these organizations—a result of an increased civic interest. One result of this activity has been to demonstrate the need of joint action among these various organizations in matters which are of common interest. Such joint action was secured informally during the winter of 1903 and 1904. During the present winter, however, a more formal union has been entered into for securing this end, while not compromising the independence of the organizations affiliated. Among the special organizations devoted to civic work the City Club may be mentioned first, since it is one of the oldest and broadest in its purpose. This organization is unique in that it combines the social life of a club-house, equipped with all modern conveniences, with the civic work its members are endeavoring to carry on. Its success since its organization in 1892 has proved the wisdom of this policy. The purpose of the organization is "to aid in securing permanent good government for the city of New York." During the thirteen years of its existence the club has grown steadily in strength and influence by reason of the character of the men who constitute its members and the prestige it has secured from results accomplished. From its inception the club has kept a close watch upon the work of the State Legislature. A committee of lawyers has examined all bills which in any way affected the city's interests. Many of these bills which would have seriously injured the city have been defeated through the efforts of the club. At the present session of the Legislature this work has been very greatly extended. A unique system of legislative information has been established, by which immediate information is secured from Albany in regard to the progress of all bills introduced, as well as notifications of all hearings either before a committee of the Legislature, before the Governor, or before the Mayor of this city. It is believed that the publicity which this information makes possible will result in a very great reduction in the number of so-called "strike" bills which may be introduced.

During the 1904 session of the Legislature the club succeeded in saving the parks in the congested quarters of the city by defeating legislation which would have destroyed these breathing places. A bill which would have accomplished this by allowing the erection of school buildings in these parks had been passed by one branch of the State Legislature when the City Club took up the matter and secured the defeat of the bill against the opposition of the city administration. During the session 1904 also the club defeated measures which would have saddled upon the taxpayers of New York City an annual increase of over a million dollars in the salaries of city employees. This was accomplished by a careful examination of forty-seven different bills, most of which on their face did not indicate the extent of the raid they made upon the City Treasury. Later in 1904 the club effectively called attention to the alliance between the Western Union Telegraph Company

and the pool rooms in this city, and placed before the community the great moral issues involved in this question. Detectives were employed, who secured incontrovertible evidence that this company had regularly-established business relations with the pool room operators. An appeal was made directly to the men on the directorate of this company to discontinue this unlawful alliance; and this appeal was successful. The club recently defeated a proposition advanced by the Chief Engineer of the Rapid Transit Commission to extend a railroad through one of the most beautiful portions of Bronx Park. As a result of the public sentiment aroused on this subject the Commission has now placed itself on record as opposed to the construction of any railroad in any park in this city. Recently also the City Club has secured the co-operation of over two hundred and fifty of the most representative men in the city in uniting to create the so-called "Committee of Nine," which is now engaged, with the President of the City Club as its chairman, in an effort to discover a satisfactory solution for the conditions which have existed for years in the police force.

One of the most important phases of the club's work during the present winter is an attempt to secure the abolition of the so-called "Raines law hotels"—practically houses of assignation, artificially created by an unfortunate provision of the law of the State. The effect of the act which has been prepared by the City Club will be to leave the existing saloons as they are, but to remove entirely, in the great majority of cases, the ten-room attachments which are the source of so much crime in this and other cities. It is not anticipated that there will be any respectable opposition to this bill. There is an overwhelming sentiment in favor of it, not only from New York, but throughout the rural districts. The club is also beginning a campaign to secure the extension of the term of the Mayor of the city from two to four years. The necessity for this change in order to secure permanent reform in this city has become apparent. A two-year term does not allow a good administration sufficient time to make results of its administration evident, but there is time enough during a two-year term for such an administration to make enemies among those who fail to understand its purposes. A special committee has recently been appointed by the club to study the transit problem, which has become acute in this city through the failure of the city authorities to adopt any comprehensive plan. Pending the report of this committee, on the basis of which the club's program in this matter will be declared, the club is opposing the extension of elevated structures through the crowded quarters of the city.

MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION.—During the year 1904 the attention of the Merchants' Association was occupied with a large number of matters directly affecting the interests of the City of New York. Among these the following may be mentioned:

The association strongly opposed the passage of the Dutchess County Water Bill excluding the city from sources of supply in that county, has preferred before the Mayor formal charges against the Aqueduct Commission, but which have resulted in a reorganization of the engineering staff of that body and a great acceleration of the work, and has, in co-operation with the

Commissioner of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity, promoted plans for an auxiliary water supply for fire purposes with adequate direct connection with private premises and adapted to the outside sprinkler system for protection from exterior fires. The association was one of the most prominent opponents of the Remsen East River Gas Bill and an important factor in securing its veto by the Governor. It has also been active in opposition to wasteful contracts by the city authorities in the matter of public lighting. After a full study of the subject, it has been active in endeavoring to secure legislative investigation of gas and electric lighting in the City of New York, having in view proper regulation and public control in the interest of consumers.

The association has moved with excellent results to lessening the delays incident to the removal of pavements and to secure their prompt replacement. A great number of defective places have been repaired consequent upon the complaint of the association. It has made several hundred complaints against hack drivers for overcharges, has secured refunds, caused the punishment of many drivers violating the cab ordinances, and noticeably lessened this public abuse. It has now under preparation a digest of the city ordinances and other laws of direct interest to citizens, to afford information to the latter as to their rights and duties. The association protested against and prevented the adoption of wasteful contracts proposed in connection with the construction of Blackwell's Island Bridge, thereby preventing a wrongful payment to the contractor of about \$125,000.

The commission appointed to investigate the laws' delays brought together a vast amount of data showing extreme abuses in condemnation proceedings and the appointment of referees and other court officials. These data were not included in the official report of the commission. It was therefore carefully collated and important schedules prepared and published by the Merchants' Association showing in the most striking form the extent of the abuses to which the city and the people of New York are subject as a result of the present law.

THE MUNICIPAL ART SOCIETY OF NEW YORK.—The Municipal Art Society, as its name implies, has for its purpose the securing of the material development of New York City along rational and artistic lines.

Largely through the instrumentality of this society the City Improvement Commission was appointed by Mayor McClellan early in the year and an appropriation secured for its use from the Board of Aldermen; that commission has made a report of great interest and value and which we expect will form the basis for a succeeding series of report which will tend to form a correct public opinion to influence the development plan of New York City. In order to emphasize the importance of planning in advance for the great public works and reorganizations which will be necessary to adapt the city to the conditons of its growth, this society has issued a series of bulletins, or committee reports, relating to the various phases of municipal development. These reports have been widely noticed in the press and have brought out favorable discussion, which has undoubtedly produced important results; particularly as regards rapid transit these ideas have been suggestive. No other organization up to the present time seems to have grasped the

significance of the development plan and the confusion and expense which must result if present methods are followed. The city has now reached a most critical period in its underground facilities, and it can determine the character of the service and the evolution of its systems of transportation, both for passengers, electricity and gas. With the exception of one subway already built, it is free to act as its interests dictate. In a few years, unless it shall continue to retain this degree of control, it will have lost it to private corporations, who will then control its subways as they now control the surface and elevated lines of transit. This, if accomplished, will be most unfortunate.

In the matter of advertising, the society has taken the ground that poster advertising should be prohibited on any public property of the city. This society was successful in a suit to restrain the Park Commissioner from maintaining advertisements on the fences around the new Public Library in process of construction at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street. It has clearly brought out the fact that the subways are virtually city streets through which only transit privileges have been granted for the time being. In response to its request the Mayor has recently ordered all signs, slot machines, and other encumbrances removed from the subway.

The society has instituted a series of lectures under the city's auspices which it is hoped to develop to larger proportions next year. Through its help the city has secured the erection of two bronze electroliers in Times Square, and it is endeavoring to bring about an annual appropriation by the city for purely artistic purposes. With this end in view it has secured from the outside a considerable appropriation for the purpose of decorating the Morris Park High School as an example of what can be accomplished in school buildings of the city.

THE NEW YORK CIVIL SERVICE REFORM ASSOCIATION has a membership of over eight hundred. It has been actively working to secure the establishment and proper enforcement of the competitive system of appointment to office, both in the State and in the city service, for the past twenty-seven years. The annual dues are \$5, and sustaining membership dues \$25. The office of the association is not only a general information bureau, but a general complaint bureau as well. The complaints received are carefully investigated and when found to be well grounded are presented to the proper authorities for action. Through its Law Committee the association has conducted many important suits to uphold the integrity of the Civil Service Law, and stands ready to take up new cases involving new and important principles. The other main divisions of its work may be briefly summarized as follows:

Every bill introduced into the New York Legislature is examined. Such of them as threaten to impair the integrity of the merit system are opposed by the association before the committees of the Legislature and before the Mayor or Governor, or both, as the case may be, by submission of briefs or by appearance and argument. Over forty such bills were so opposed during the session of 1903-4, and of these only three (all of minor importance) became laws.

The action of the association in regard to the request for the exemption of the Deputy Tax Commissioners in New York City during the McClellan administration is a good example of the work done under this head. These positions have been filled for a number of years through the medium of competitive examination. The Deputy Tax Commissioners perform the important duty of assessing both real and personal property in the first instance. The matter was fought out before the Municipal Commission, the Mayor and the State Commission, with the result that the State Commission finally decided in favor of the association's contention.

The association keeps careful watch on the administration of the law by the Municipal Commission. One of the most striking results of this constant vigilance was the removal by Mayor McClellan of the entire Civil Service Commission and a Park Commissioner of the Bronx on charges preferred by the association. Failing to secure any remedy from the commission, the association sent a letter to the Mayor setting forth the case in full. He promptly responded, stating that he had instituted an investigation, and asking that the association should assist the city administration in enforcing the Civil Service Law both in letter and in spirit. The result of the investigation convinced the Mayor of the soundness of the charges brought by the association, the removals were made and a new Commission (restricted, in accordance with the suggestions of the association, to three members) was appointed.

THE TRANSIT REFORM COMMITTEE OF ONE HUNDRED was organized on January 6, 1903. It was called into existence because the elevated and surface railroad corporations of this city had shown such an utter disregard of the comfort and rights of their passengers that the public generally manifested a sense of keen indignation; the overcrowding of the cars had become so intolerable as to be a menace to the safety of the passengers and an outrage upon their sense of decency. It had become apparent that the State Railroad Board, which was vested by law with the supervision and control of all the railroads within the State, was both incompetent and neglectful of its duties. Repeated efforts to make that board perform its functions and compel the railroad companies to obey the law had been of no avail, and those corporations not only failed to provide proper accommodations for the public but evaded and violated their statutory obligations. The situation upon the upper West Side became acute, and those who desired to continue their residence in that section were subjected to constantly increasing discomfort; many others who would otherwise have made their homes in that section found it to their advantage to leave the city altogether. The result was not only that citizens were deprived of the ordinary comforts of travel but property owners found their holdings decreasing in value. Out of these conditions the Committee was born.

The first conclusion arrived at as the result of the deliberations of the committee was that the transit situation of this city demonstrated not only the inefficiency of the State Railroad Commission and its neglect to deal with the city's needs, but required that the supervision of the city railroads should be lodged in a city board appointed by the Mayor, and in that way

more directly responsible to the people. The committee therefore drafted and secured the introduction in the Legislature of a bill providing for the creation of a local railroad commission. In support of this measure the Transit Reform Committee of One Hundred secured the co-operation of upwards of forty civic organizations in New York City, including the Board of Trade and Transportation, the Citizens' Union, the City Club, the West End Association, and the Women's Health Protective Association. The opposition to this bill, which has now been introduced in three successive Legislatures, has come mainly from the railroad corporations.

In February, 1903, the Law Committee of the Committee of One Hundred publicly declared that the railroad law required the street surface railroad companies in New York City operating under leases to give free transfers at their intersecting points under a penalty of \$50 for each refusal. A test case was prepared and submitted to the courts, resulting in a decision in favor of the committee's contention. Subsequently the entire question came up for review before the Court of Appeals, and a final decision was in November, 1904, secured from that court sustaining the public's right to free transfers. Meanwhile, and doubtless owing to the large number of penalty suits instituted by citizens, the railroad corporation controlling the various lines in this city increased its number of transfer points to a very material degree and immediately after the decision of the Court of Appeals enlarged the number of these points so that at the present time transfers are practically universal. The decision on the question of law involved is clear. It also appeared from the briefs submitted on behalf of the railroad company in the Court of Appeals that a decision sustaining the contentions of the committee would effectively bar a consolidation of the Brooklyn and Metropolitan syndicates of street surface railroads in that the price of giving transfers as a condition to the making of a lease between the two railroads would be too expensive for the companies.

During the two years of its existence the committee has kept a very careful watch upon legislation affecting street railroads in New York City. During these two years many bills, designed to revive expired franchises and to grant others in perpetuity, sometimes without compensation, and measures the object of which was either to deprive or to limit the citizens' right to free transfers have been introduced in the Legislature. The committee's opposition, reinforced by that of other organizations, whose co-operation the committee was able to secure, and the assistance of a practically united metropolitan press, resulted in the defeat of all these measures. The passage of only a few of them would have resulted in the loss of franchises to the city worth vast sums of money and the depriving of the public of their rights to transfers.

THE WEST END ASSOCIATION.—The existence of the West End Association dates from 1884. The object of the organization is the improvement of that part of New York City lying between Fifty-ninth and Manhattan Streets west of Eighth Avenue. This association has from the time of its formation interested itself in and taken action upon almost every question related to the material interests of the West End.

The Boulevard: This thoroughfare received a large share of attention from the organization of the association in 1884 to the time when it became part of Broadway, in 1899, appropriations being made at various times, in the early days, for the cleaning of cross-walks, etc. During the year 1900 a vigorous, though unsuccessful, effort was made to save the trees along the thoroughfare, the removal of which was rendered necessary by the construction of the Rapid Transit Subway. The trees planted by the contractor, upon the completion of the subway work, not having proved satisfactory, a movement has been begun looking to the planting of the Broadway parkways with shrubbery instead.

Seventy-ninth Street Dump: Every one who recalls the ash and garbage dump which for years stood at the foot of West Seventy-ninth Street must appreciate the improvement effected by its removal. This resulted after one of the longest and hardest fights ever made by the association. Begun early in 1891, it lasted until the passage of Chapter 900 of the Laws of 1895, whereby the establishment of any such nuisance on the water front of a park above Fifty-ninth Street is forbidden.

New York and New Jersey Bridge: The plan of the projectors of the scheme was to cross the Hudson River at a point which would begin the twenty-nine-mile "approach" planned for the New York end at the lower end of Riverside Park. The association fought this encroachment at every step, both here and in Congress, and at the end of five years, late in 1895, had the satisfaction of knowing that the bridge would not be allowed to land on the Park front.

Amsterdam Avenue. The effort to prevent the establishment of four tracks for cars operated by the underground trolley, which resulted in the passage of Chapter 371 of the Laws of 1899, and accomplished that result, was one that enlisted the services of a number of organizations on the West Side. It may safely be said that none contributed more, in time and money, and in the work of its members, than did the West End Association.

Street Signs: During the years 1902-03 a great deal of work was done by the committee having in charge the matter of procuring proper street signs, the results of which are manifest. This association is now represented in the Street Signing Conference of Municipal Organizations, formed in November, 1904, as a result of whose activity \$30,000 has been appropriated for erecting adequate signs in the city.

Brooklyn League.—During the last twelve months, as in the past six years, the Brooklyn League has been watchful of the larger interests of Brooklyn, and has identified itself with many civic enterprises, among which the following may be mentioned: 1, extension of Flatbush Avenue; 2, erection of an enlarged terminal at Manhattan End of the Brooklyn Bridge; 3, erection of a Municipal Building for Greater New York; 4, erection of sanitary stables for the Street Cleaning Department; 5, extension of the Manhattan approach to the Williamsburg bridge; 6, extension of the Williamsburg Bridge plaza to Grand Street; 7, extension of the subway system in Brooklyn; 8, protection of motormen in winter by vestibules on trolley cars; 9, consideration and approval of a local commission to examine the quality of gas;

10, examination of real property assessments, and reporting facts back to members; consideration and approval of the Bostwick Mortgage Tax Bill; 11, securing new Carnegie Libraries; 12, consideration of resolutions of local improvement boards which had lapsed with the change of administration; 13, consideration and approval of the new Erie Canal improvement; 14, protest against the removal of Deputy Tax Commissioners from the classified service; 15, special excursions to Bay Ridge Sewer; New York Subway; Williamsburg Bridge; Department of Correction on Riker's, Hart's, Randall's, and Blackwell's Islands; Department of Immigration on Ellis Island, and power houses and general equipment of the Brooklyn Rapid Transit System.

PHILADELPHIA

1. CITIZENS' MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION.
2. LAW AND ORDER SOCIETY.
3. THE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE.
4. THE COMMITTEE OF SEVENTY.

The Citizens' Municipal Association of Philadelphia was organized in April, 1886, and incorporated about a year later. It was composed of a number of prominent men, some of whom had been directly interested in the Committee of One Hundred, which was disbanded only a few months earlier. At one time the membership reached 300, but at present it is hardly half that number. The organization is supported by annual dues and by voluntary subscriptions. From the time of its incorporation until the present the association has held consistently to the policy set forth in its constitution: First, to secure a strict fulfillment by public officers of all their obligations to the city and to the citizens; and, secondly, to take no part in nominations or elections to public office. Its greatest effort was put forth when the streets were repaved, and to it the city owes not a little by way of gratitude for efficient service in calling to account, from time to time, contractors who were failing to fulfill the conditions imposed upon them. While this association performed valuable service in the past, it has unfortunately dropped out of public notice to a considerable degree.

The Law and Order Society was organized in the autumn of 1881, but it never received much public notice until about four years ago. In fact the existence of such a society was unknown to many until it began to take an active hand in the suppression of vice. Although organized for the express purpose of enforcing the laws against Sunday traffic of whatever nature, the laws relating to the liquor traffic, and to encourage and assist the authorities in the maintenance of these laws, it has not hesitated to go beyond this object. The latest annual report of the society shows that during twelve months 302 proprietors and inmates of "speakeasies" and bawdy houses have been arrested and indicted. Of those brought to trial some were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from one month to two years. Upon their release many have become law-abiding citizens, while

others have fled the city. Eight hundred slot machines were burned in May of last year which had been taken from stores and resorts in various parts of the city. Through the efforts of the secretary there are but few public places in the city where gambling devices are in use. This society is maintained entirely by private subscription, the subscribers numbering approximately 600. One of the difficulties which the society has to face in its work is the lack of sufficient funds. During the last year it disbursed about twenty thousand dollars. A further obstacle to future success has just been presented in the Puhl Bill, which was introduced into the legislature on Wednesday, February 22d, compelling unincorporated societies to file annual reports.

The Municipal League of Philadelphia was organized in the autumn of 1891, and played an important part in civic affairs until its activities were definitely suspended on November 28, 1904. Its organization consisted of a Board of Managers of about fifty members, Ward Committees in about half of the forty-two wards of the city, and Division Committees in the wards where its activities and influence were greatest. It had a nominal membership of about six thousand, and polled votes for its candidates varying from two thousand to fifty-eight thousand at different elections. Through its various committees it exercised a constant supervision over the work of the administrative offices of the city government, and especially sought to influence proposed legislation in City Councils. Its work was largely educational—creating and fostering a public sentiment in the city in favor of the absolute separation of municipal from state and national politics, in favor of the merit system, in opposition to the award of important public contracts without competition to favored political contractors, and in opposition to grants of valuable public franchises in perpetuity and without provision for regulation by and remuneration to the city. It took part in a number of elections for municipal officers and members of the Legislature, on some occasions endorsing the candidates of the regular parties and on others, when none of these could be recommended, nominating candidates of its own. It never succeeded in carrying a city election, but elected a number of ward officers, minority city officers, and members of the Legislature. Through its efforts the constitution of the state was amended in 1901 so as to make possible legislation providing for the personal registration of voters. It won important victories in various test cases brought in the courts. Among these were the one setting aside the Governor's attempted veto of the constitutional amendment just referred to, others placing a definite interpretation on sections of the election law, including the "lists of voters" case, and others resulting in the unseating of members of Councils interested in municipal contracts. Before terminating its activities it called a conference of prominent citizens, as a result of which a new body, the Committee of Seventy, has been formed, with somewhat different organization, with greater resources, but with similar aims.

The Committee of Seventy.—At the suggestion of the Municipal League a meeting of representative citizens was held at the Bourse on November 14, 1904. Here a Committee of Seven was selected to formulate some plan

looking toward the political improvement of the city. On the afternoon of December 19th another similar meeting was held, at which the report of this committee was submitted by its chairman and unanimously adopted. Acting upon this report a Committee of Seventy was appointed. The chairman was given power to select eight others who, with himself, were to act as an executive board with full powers. The members of this committee were chosen from different professions. There is a doctor, a lawyer, a banker, a druggist, president of a labor union and a merchant. An annual income of \$50,000 dollars for three years has been practically guaranteed by private subscription. The committee was organized in the first place with the intention of entering into municipal politics. But it was not intended that the new organization should be a political party, but rather an expression of the opinion of the better element in the city. After some hesitation the committee began work by endorsing a number of candidates already nominated by the two parties and also by making several independent nominations. The fight for clean politics once begun was carried on with considerable vigor in a number of the more independent wards, but without immediate success. There is, however, no tendency to give up hope, but rather a strong determination to bring to a successful conclusion all the purposes for which the committee was organized.

BOSTON

THE GOOD GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

By EDMUND BILLINGS, Esq., Secretary.

This Association was organized in the spring of 1903 by delegates from the seven following business organizations of this city: Boston Chamber of Commerce, Bar Association, Real Estate Exchange, Merchants' Association, Association Board of Trade, Fruit and Produce Exchange, New England Shoe and Leather Association. Its purpose is to awaken public interest in city affairs and to secure the election of aggressively honest and capable men for municipal office without regard to party affiliations. We have opened a ledger account with every man in public life in our municipality, and we propose to make public the records and qualifications of all such when the occasion requires.

In our first campaign in 1903 we published and sent to all voters of this city an impartial statement, the result of much labor and painstaking investigation, giving the political and private record of all of the candidates for our Common Council and for the Board of Aldermen. In the case of the Board of Aldermen, which is the most important chamber, we made recommendations to the voters based on the result of our investigations. We found that out of some thirty odd candidates for this board we were able to endorse nine men. The board consists of thirteen members. Of these nine men we succeeded in electing five. In the campaign of 1904 we adopted practically the same methods as in the former year. Out of

twenty-six candidates this last year who ran for the Board of Aldermen, we recommended nine men, five Republicans and four Democrats, and succeeded in electing six, coming within one of securing the majority of the board in the second year of our organization. In addition to this the Association by a variety of methods has stirred up the citizens to a more serious consideration of its political duties and has forced the Democratic and Republican parties alike to consider more carefully the character of the men whom they nominate for public office. This is the first time in the history of our city when all voters had the opportunity of knowing in detail the qualifications and standing of the men for whom they were called upon to vote.

The value of this kind of publicity has been shown in many ways. It is commonly accepted that one source of petty graft in the Board of Aldermen has been in the matter of the carriage bills which they were allowed to incur, presumably while in pursuance of their city duties. The first publication of these bills showed that the total amount spent by thirteen aldermen was \$13,273. This item occasioned a great deal of unfavorable comment, and the following year the same board spent only \$3,513, showing a saving of about \$10,000 in this one item. The value of the organization has been shown in various other ways. For example, in certain districts before the primaries this year, party leaders urged the nomination for important office of certain desirable men on the ground that if nominated against other candidates who were less worthy, they would receive the endorsement of the Good Government Association, thus practically ensuring their election.

In addition to this work, dealing directly with candidates, we have attempted to stir up that somewhat disreputable class of citizens sometimes called the "Stay-at-home-voter." Our city is divided into twenty-five wards, and each ward into seven, eight or nine precincts, giving us in all one hundred and ninety-four precincts. From last year's voting list we checked the names of the men who did not vote, and sent to them a direct personal appeal, urging them to vote and to vote right, and to use their influence with their neighbors and friends who also refrained from voting last year. With each letter was enclosed a list of the names of all the men in the given precinct who did not vote at the previous election. This work came in for a good deal of favorable notice from the press and undoubtedly resulted in stirring up many negligent voters. The whole basis of this movement lies in the belief, confidently held by the officers of the Association that a majority of the citizens of Boston wish to see honest and capable men in control of the city.

BALTIMORE

THE REFORM LEAGUE

By SOLOMON BLUM, Johns Hopkins University.

This organization is noteworthy in many ways. Its existence for twenty years has been a continuous fight against political corruption in Baltimore

city. Its history may be divided into three periods: First, from its organization, in 1885 to 1895, a period of discouragement and non-success in its conflict against the firmly entrenched Baltimore city and state ring. Second, in 1895, when the League led the great public revolt against corruption, which elected the Republican candidate for Governor and United States Senator. Third, from 1895 to date, a period of activity and watchfulness, which has resulted in the growth of a higher civic spirit in the selection of men of better caliber for municipal offices. The League does its work through ward clubs composed of members of the League, and through standing committees appointed by the general executive board. These include a committee on legislation, which promotes beneficial and opposes harmful legislation, a committee to "Detect, expose, and, so far as possible, correct all abuses and frauds in the registration of voters, and conduct of elections in Baltimore city," a committee on public officials, whose duty shall be to investigate the antecedents, character and conduct of public officers, or candidates or applicants for offices in or from Baltimore city; the committee of publication informs the public, through the press and otherwise, of the views and principles of the League, and all other matters deemed advisable by the said committee.

The campaign of 1895 was the most important in the League's history. It is not too much to say that to its activity and efficiency in stirring public sentiment in the city and state was largely due the overthrow of the powerful Democratic organization, and the growth of a healthy independence in State, and more particularly in municipal politics.

The League is a strictly non-partisan body. In its ranks are many of the strongest men in the city of both parties. It investigates the records of all candidates for offices of both parties. Probably the most important work is its investigation of election officials. A few figures may prove instructive. From 1895 to 1899 it prevented the appointment or caused the removal of two supervisors of elections and over one hundred judges and clerks of election, added to which it has prosecuted and convicted about one hundred election offenders. In 1901 seventeen judges were removed, two allowed to resign and eleven charges dismissed. In the same year out of seven hundred clerks seven were deemed undesirable, and five excused from service. In 1902 out of a total of two thousand two hundred and fifty appointees only twelve were found to be unfit. The League watches the registration of voters, and has prepared a list of three thousand six hundred persons who are disqualified from voting. The League has not confined its activities solely to the regulating the machinery of elections. The campaign of 1895 was waged on the issue of ballot law reform, and an improved Australian Ballot law resulted. The Democrats upon returning to power have modified the law, with the purpose of disfranchising the negro. The organization has opposed this upon the ground that it is simply a political device to maintain one party in power. A Corrupt Practices act, drawn up by the League, whose purpose it is to limit election expenditure of candidates, has been up to the present unsuccessful. In Baltimore city, where its influence is more directly felt, it has investigated the various departments with

salutary results. An investigation of the school board resulted in the selection of a non-partisan board of high character. It has made an exhaustive investigation of the police and straw bail evils, and has broken up both these practices, and in many other ways it has helped to purify the police force. While the tangible results of the League's activities have been great, probably still greater is the influence it has upon the two great parties, the press and the ever-increasing independent vote. The candidates and appointees have improved since 1895, and while the League is watchful citizens will not have the excuse of ignorance to offer for electing corrupt candidates. The League serves as a nucleus for the independent vote of the city. It now has about five hundred members, and its average total expenditure is less than \$5,000 per year. It is one more example of the influence that a few men well-organized and actuated by an unselfish spirit may exert.

CLEVELAND

MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION

By F. E. STEVENS, ESQ., Secretary.

The Municipal Association of Cleveland was organized in the winter of 1896. Since then it has continuously applied itself to the work prescribed at the time of its formation. The founder and for a number of years the leader in the work of the Association was Harry A. Garfield, who now occupies the Chair of Political Jurisprudence of Princeton University. The practical conduct of the organization is undertaken by a committee of ten representative business and professional men, known as the Executive Committee. A secretary employed by the committee gives his entire time to the details of the work. The plan of control by the Executive Committee is a result of experience. Formerly many subjects now dealt with solely by this committee were referred to a larger committee less intimately related to the activities of the Association. But experience developed the fact that expeditious, positive and aggressive action could best be secured through the agency of a small committee familiar with municipal conditions and with the political forces creating them.

More than to any other object the Association has directed its attention to elections affecting municipal administration. Those who have given most of time and thought to the enterprise are increasingly convinced that elections, both primary and general, must receive vigorous attention from those who seek to improve civic conditions. Efforts to thwart corruptionists and to repair the havoc wrought by maladministration produce but small returns unless these efforts are directed toward the source of the evil—the choosing of officials at the polls. The Association has at all times insisted that good city government can be secured only by the placing in office of upright and capable officials. Its rather crude though unmistakable shibboleth is—"Citizens who want good government must vote for good men." It has urged independent voting in municipal affairs. No attempt has been made to create a third or citizens' party, but the belief has been strength-

ened that thorough-going independence of choice between candidates on local tickets is entirely consistent with loyalty to the national parties, inasmuch as national issues have no bearing upon municipal affairs. Constant effort has been made to increase the number of independent voters. This effort has met with a considerable degree of success. No city in the country shows a greater percentage of voters of this class. In the last campaign out of a total vote of some 85,000 the differences between votes received by candidates on the same ticket aggregated many thousands, in one instance amounting to a difference of 38,000 votes between the head of the ticket and another candidate. The Association is quite generally given the credit for having aroused this spirit by the consistent activities of the past nine years. It is well within the limits of conservative statement to say that no notoriously corrupt or incompetent official can now secure re-election, and where the candidates must receive the votes of the entire city, as distinguished from ward elections, none can secure office whose reputations are notoriously bad. "Split tickets" are frequently elected, composed of those candidates who enjoy the greater popular confidence.

The method employed by the Association in influencing voters is simply the publication of facts concerning the candidates. It makes a diligent effort to secure reliable information as to the record, antecedents and fitness of the candidate, and then publishes in the newspapers and in pamphlets the result of its inquiries. In the last campaign seven bulletins of information and recommendation were published in the daily papers. Between campaigns the Association keeps itself informed as to the character of administration, the direction and purpose of expenditures and the records of officials. When occasion demands and opportunity permits corrective action is taken either by appeals to public opinion or by legal process. The ideal municipal government has not been secured and there is yet much room for advance. But it is believed that an analysis of the situation and a comparison with former conditions here and with present conditions in many other cities give a reasonable basis for the conviction that clean municipal government **is not impossible of attainment**, and that such a condition may be permanently **secured through enlightened public sentiment freed from a false allegiance to national parties in municipal affairs.**

BUFFALO

MUNICIPAL LEAGUE.¹

The League is composed of disinterested men who desire to secure better city conditions. To this end the League has secured and equipped permanent headquarters in Ellicott Square in charge of a competent man, adequately paid, who devotes his time to the work. The League has opened a ledger account with every man who is a city or county official, or who aspires to be one, in which a record of his public acts will be impartially kept, and prior to any election in which he is a can-

¹ President, Dr. Ernest Wende; Secretary, Porter R. Lee

didate this record will be published and made accessible to every voter. Party leaders will be asked to put up good men as candidates. Such candidates will receive the support of the League. Unworthy candidates the League will use its best efforts to defeat. If good men are not nominated by any party, the League will put up independent candidates. The acts of the legislative and administrative departments of the city will be carefully watched by the representative of the League for the purpose of furnishing information on which future action of the League may be determined. The League will investigate charges made on substantial authority against any public official, and will bring to justice, if possible, any official who has proved untrue to his oath of office. Every question that concerns the city's welfare will be regarded as proper matter for investigation and action on the part of the League.

CINCINNATI

CITIZENS MUNICIPAL PARTY.

By MAX B. MAY, Esq., Cincinnati, Ohio.

In the spring of 1903 there was organized in the city of Cincinnati The Citizens' Municipal Party upon the platform, "Total separation of national and state and municipal elections." At that time the movement of the party met with disastrous defeat; nevertheless the organization continued its existence. Its executive committee kept alive the interest in the work, and its chairman, Elliott H. Pendleton, on his own behalf, has issued weekly since then a four-page paper, known as the *Citizen's Bulletin*, in which from week to week information regarding local conditions is set forth. The Citizens' party hoped that in the spring of 1904 it could accomplish something. The Ohio legislature, however, in the spring of 1904 abolished municipal elections throughout the State of Ohio, which since 1802 had been held separate and apart from all state and national elections, and provided that the same should be held in November, 1905; but that legislature also adopted a constitutional amendment which will be voted on in 1905, which, if ratified by the party, will again bring about the total separation of national, state and municipal elections. In the November, 1904, municipal elections, inasmuch as a new school code had been adopted and three members at large and twenty-four members from as many school districts were to be elected, the Citizens' Municipal party nominated a ticket at large and candidates in each school district. The Democratic party endorsed the Citizens' nominees at large in nearly every district. At the election, owing to the fact that it was presidential year, only one of the Citizens' candidates was successful. However, the very effective campaign made at that time not only awakened public sentiment, but fortunately has compelled the Republican machine to introduce measures for the betterment of the Cincinnati schools.

In November next there will be a municipal election, and at present it is the intention of the Citizens' party to place an independent ticket before

the voters. The Executive Committee of that party is now organizing ward clubs throughout the city, and it is to be hoped that by next fall a complete organization throughout the city will be effected. The *Citizens' Bulletin* continues to appear weekly, and while its circulation is not as large as the friends of good government desire it to be, still, its influence is growing. The Citizens' Municipal party has a permanent secretary and several assistant secretaries, who attend the meetings of the city council and other public bodies, and this in itself has had a salutary effect. Of course at this time it is utterly impossible to state just what has been actually accomplished by the Citizens' Municipal party. As far as securing the election of its candidates is concerned it has not succeeded, but it has already created sentiment in favor of good government; it has compelled the dominant machine to be more cautious in its actions; it has forced public bodies, such as the school board, to take immediate measures along the lines contended for by the Municipal party.

NEW ORLEANS, LA.

1. PARK IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION.
2. PROGRESSIVE UNION.
3. COMMERCIAL EXCHANGES.

BY JAMES J. McLOUGHLIN, ESQ.

The traditions and system of government of New Orleans and of the State of Louisiana are so different from those of the rest of our country that one unacquainted with these factors is apt to misconstrue much that occurs. For centuries controlled by a system of government that conceived it the duty of the governing power to order as much as possible of the daily routine of the private lives of its subjects, indelible traces of those olden days still survive in our laws, manners and customs. Louisiana regulates the hours when meats and market supplies may be sold, provides public market houses, outside of which butchers and green grocers are forbidden to ply their avocations; restricts peddlers of eatables to certain hours of the afternoon to roam the streets; prescribes the weights of loaves of bread and makes it the duty of the Mayor to publish weekly price lists for the observance of bakers, and in a thousand ways impresses upon the mind of the citizen that the State will do his thinking for him. True, as the centuries pass, these swaddling clothes of the infant are gradually falling from the form of the man, but the weight of immemorial custom and usage is hard to shake off. Consequently the inhabitants of the State and city have not yet made of civic organizations that effective use that is of so much help to the progress of their neighbors.

Accustomed to having the government attend to everything—even yet the Governor of Louisiana appoints nearly all officials charged with the functions of government in country parishes, and he appoints absolutely the assessors whose duty it is to value all property for taxation—they are

not yet prepared to realize to the full their capacity of providing the ways and means of their own welfare.

Assuming the civic organization to be a body of citizens, responsible not at all, or, at best, only slightly, to the control of the government, and eliminating from our consideration such as are merely temporarily formed for some particular purpose, and of course excluding political clubs, and also excluding those societies devoted to charity and religious work, there remain those public associations that will form the subject of this review. Foremost among these are those organizations whose purpose it is to make more attractive the conditions of living: such as park associations, street commissions and the like. These usually take in charge the parks, squares and better streets of the city, and keep them in order, and improve them in many ways. Having charge of public property, they are generally created by municipal authority, and subservient thereto; but beyond a rather perfunctory oversight, the municipal body rarely takes any hand in their work.

We have two large public parks, one, Audubon Park, of 280 acres; the other City Park, of 216 acres, besides numerous smaller parks or squares. These are confided by the city to the care of commissions of citizens. These commissions are usually appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the city council. They have power to enforce the police ordinances of the city in their respective charges, and to administer the small sum of money that is annually devoted by the city to their streets or parks. Beyond that they rely upon subscriptions from residents and neighbors to supplement the city's appropriation. The two parks mentioned are managed by two private societies, who elect their own members, choose their own officers, and manage their own funds. By special legislative acts the care and custody of the parks are confided to the boards of commissioners selected by these societies, and the public funds appropriated to the maintenance of the parks are disbursed by these two societies. The city of New Orleans is compelled by law to pay over to each of these boards \$15,000 annually, and this forms the chief source of revenue. Upon occasions Audubon Park permits circuses to pitch their tents in the park, and a rental is paid therefor. Both parks receive rentals for privileges granted to flying-horses, carousals, refreshment stands and similar affairs. No liquors are sold in either park. These park commissioners have made of practically waste places fine gardens, landscapes, groves of trees, beautiful shrubbery and public resorts worthy of admiration. The Audubon Park commissioners are now engaged in carrying out a grand plan of surface improvement under directions of Mr. Olmsted, which will take ten years to complete, but which, when completed, will make Audubon Park one of the best in the country. The Horticultural Hall in this park is famed for its collection of tropical plants. The City Park was formerly an old plantation, and comprises within its limits what was once the most famous dueling ground in the South. Like its newer neighbor, Audubon Park, it boasts some of the most magnificent live oaks in Louisiana, hundreds of years old, draped with the funereal Spanish moss. Beyond the two parks mentioned New Orleans owns many smaller parks, and the

care of them, and of the more pretentious avenues, is turned over to commissions of citizens, as stated above. There are thirty-three of these commissions, and during 1904 the city appropriated to them \$18,038. Fifty miles of streets are under care of these little commissions, and with the funds received from the city, supplemented from private contributions, they keep the roadways clean, plant trees and shrubs, mow lawns, and, in some instances, remove garbage. Many of the wider avenues of New Orleans have in their centre a stretch of lawn, from ten to thirty feet wide, locally styled "neutral ground," and this stretch is kept neat and clean, and, in most cases, planted with palms and trees by the various commissions.

In addition to these civic organizations devoted to the physical betterment of the city, we have others that are devoted to its commercial progress. Chief among these is the Progressive Union, a body of some 1,500 merchants and professional men, who look after the task of placing the commercial and social advantages of New Orleans before prospective visitors and investors. This association entertains prominent visitors, exploits new enterprises, invites conventions and representative gatherings to hold their sessions in New Orleans, and, in general, acts as a medium through which outsiders can find out all that New Orleans wants outsiders to know about her advantages. The expenses of this work are met by an annual membership fee and by public subscriptions from time to time as occasion requires.

I am not so sure but that the commercial exchanges of the city should be embraced within the limits of any article treating of the city's civic organizations. In a city like New Orleans it is to these bodies the citizen naturally turns whenever any great public work is to be undertaken. They appoint committees and raise money for every public movement. If it is the question of securing a government appropriation for a public building, or the establishment of a dry dock, or the deepening of the mouth of the river, or the choice of good men for office in municipal elections—be it what it may, the Commercial Exchanges get together and lead the way. At the head of these, of course, stands the Cotton Exchange, with the wealth of the cotton trade behind it. A close corporation, organized to benefit its members, it is yet ever foremost in all movements for civic good. To its conservative action is due the comparative immunity from strikes of cotton handlers that prevails in New Orleans. The Board of Trade is an organization of produce merchants, grain dealers, dealers in breadstuffs, etc., and it takes really a wider interest in public affairs than does the Cotton Exchange. Its membership being more diverse, its interests are logically more numerous, and extend in various directions. When a prominent official, like the Secretary of the Treasury, visits New Orleans, it is usually the Board of Trade that feasts him. Commercially its influence is profound.

The other bodies, such as the Sugar Exchange, Real Estate Exchange, and the like, co-operate with the others in all civic movements, but the two first named are the leaders.

As mentioned in the opening, New Orleans is peculiarly constituted, and we have few of those organizations that are so numerous in sister

cities. As for library societies, good government clubs, etc., we have practically none, except such as are adjuncts to some religious, charitable or political body. Consequently it would appear that that public spirit which in other cities finds a manifestation in the existence of numerous societies for civic betterment is wanting in New Orleans; but, as a matter of fact, it does exist here, although the agencies of which it makes use are so different from those customarily employed elsewhere.

MILWAUKEE⁸

1. MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION.

2. MUNICIPAL VOTERS' LEAGUE.

By JOHN A. BUTLER, Esq., Milwaukee, Wis.

In 1894 the Milwaukee Municipal Association was established with the idea that by drawing to itself a large membership it could hold the balance of power between the two great national parties in the city, and sufficiently determine their candidates and policies, to approximately insure non-partisan conditions, better candidates and better government. It is doubtful whether this policy was generally understood in the organization itself, but the somewhat experienced gentleman, who proposed the formation of the Association, believed in it then and still maintains his belief. The gradual development of what may be called the independent or thinking vote should make this position more tenable now than was possible twelve years ago. Nothing decisive ever came of this policy in Milwaukee, for reasons which may be readily understood. At the outset, when the association was supposed to have several thousand members on its list, editors and politicians promptly sought out its president for suggestions as to nominations. They were never heard of after it became known that the membership comprised only six or seven hundred voters. The organization was at first composed of a large body of leading citizens, but the moment it took up questions relating to franchise holding companies, and prominent men in other business enterprises discovered that their sales to public institutions were cut off by politicians, or that politics affected their interests unfavorably in some other way, by reason of their connection with it, its membership rapidly diminished. It, however, enjoyed the goodwill and approval of the community as a whole in an increased degree, and a small number of its members continued their efforts for five or six years, and were able to accomplish tangible results, which have undoubtedly proved of great value to the city. The intangible, but no less certain moral influence of the organization was, of course, constant, but it naturally cannot be measured or described. The Association was able to secure the insertion of civil service planks in the party platforms of both the leading national

⁸ The first concrete work of reform in Milwaukee was accomplished by the establishment of the fire and police service on a strictly civil service reform basis. The results have been eminently satisfactory and are a source of justifiable local pride. The Civil Service Reform League by which this was accomplished is no longer active.

parties on various occasions, and finally succeeded in placing the entire working force, under the control of the Board of Public Works, on a merit basis, something like two thousand or twenty-five hundred men. To do this a bill was drafted by a competent committee. When it had been completed a circular, describing its character, was prepared and addressed to leading citizens of the principal cities of Wisconsin, asking their views and assistance. The response was immediate and emphatic, and came from nearly all of the forty-two leading cities of the State. Men of influence took hold cordially on all sides, and sent brief, pointed and interesting replies, endorsing the proposed civil service measure, though it applied to Milwaukee only. These replies were at once published in one of the leading Milwaukee daily papers, conspicuously covering several pages. They formed an interesting symposium, and were of course read by the people of the entire State. Subsequently, at the League's request, many of the gentlemen in the cities referred to showed great public spirit in circulating petitions in their respective communities, urging the passage of the bill. The number and extent of these petitions was almost unprecedented in the history of the State. In addition to this, special influence was brought to bear on legislators from their home districts, so that the entire State was for the moment brought into the service of the Association; and its own direct efforts to secure the passage of the bill were thus greatly reinforced. On another occasion, the city government of Milwaukee introduced a measure in the legislature legalizing levies exceeding the tax limit of fourteen mills on every dollar of assessed valuation, as far as past levies were concerned, and raising the limit by a mill and a half for the future. A large public meeting was at once held by the Association, and twenty-five leading citizens were induced to go before the legislative committee at Madison when the city officials presented their arguments. The representatives of the League were successful in protecting and making permanent the fourteen mill limit, and thus saved the taxpayers of Milwaukee many hundreds of thousands of dollars. The organization also succeeded with no very great effort in securing the passage of a Corrupt Practices Act of a limited character, the principal provision of which requires every candidate to make a sworn statement of the money expended in his campaign. This applies to all elections in the State. At about the same time the Association framed a bill establishing a non-partisan board or commission for Milwaukee, charged with the duty of appointing school directors to supervise and control the public schools of the city, and to examine, appoint, classify and promote, or remove teachers. The law which has done much to take the public schools out of politics is a vast improvement over the former system, but it does not require detailed description, as the writer gave a full account in the last ANNALS.* The last considerable effort of the organization was made in 1899. In 1896, when the general spirit of agitation was very strong in Milwaukee, the street railway company expressed a willingness to grant the people an unconditional four-cent fare. Nothing came of it, as nothing had come of many similar propositions. In 1899, as a result of much agitation, an "inspired"

*January, 1905, page 177.

ordinance was introduced in the city council, offering an immediate four-cent fare at certain hours for workmen and a general four-cent fare at the expiration of five years; but for this was asked a grant of twelve new franchises of great value and a ten years' extension of existing franchises which would expire in 1924. The matter was very hotly discussed on all sides, and the Municipal Association called an indignation meeting denouncing the provisions of the contract involving ordinance. The meeting was representative and marked by strong and bitter feeling. A committee of thirty men was appointed to fight the ordinance in the council committees. Subsequently two other similar meetings were called by the Association, and were followed by great meetings in every ward in the city. Many members of the Association, who sympathized with the street railway company, deserted it, and politicians of the better order, who had refused to take any part in the first meeting, now monopolized the situation and precipitated a struggle without accomplishing their purpose, as the ordinance was passed, and is now in force. The previous general agitation, in which the Association had taken a leading part, undoubtedly secured the four-cent fare, but not at a price which satisfied patriotic citizens. From that time forth the Association gradually disintegrated and it no longer exists actively.

A little over a year ago a Municipal Voters' League was established in Milwaukee, which did good work at the last election, and brought about a large number of indictments of city officials by the Grand Jury, many of whom have already been convicted and either heavily fined or imprisoned. The League promises to become a strong and useful organization, but has thus far discovered no permanent remedy for the conditions which bring bad men to the front in city politics.

PROVIDENCE

1. THE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE.
2. THE PUBLIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION.
3. THE PUBLIC PARK ASSOCIATION.
4. THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

By SYDNEY A. THOMAS, ESQ., Providence, R. I.

A review of the last few years discloses very little that has actually been accomplished by the civic associations of Providence. Some of them have had their influence, but in no case have they pushed to complete success any plan or measure for the public good. Their work has been chiefly either to protest against bad acts and policies, or to educate public sentiment in favor of good ones.

For a few years after its inception the Municipal League was powerful enough to send to the city council and to the State legislature a number of good men, but they were always in the minority in those bodies, and their

presence had at most a temporary sobering effect upon the machine. The League has also thrown its influence in favor of independent Democratic candidates for mayor, until it has become the custom for that party to put up its very best men for the office and for them to be elected. The League has done much good work in the way of public discussion, especially in protest against franchise grabs and in favor of free transfer tickets.

The Public Education Association, by calling attention to certain defects in the administration of the public schools, has brought about improvements indirectly, as indicated in my last letter. Last year the Association got a bill for a school commission of five members through the lower house of the State legislature, but it was pigeonholed in the Senate.¹⁰

The Public Park Association, recently organized, has begun a campaign of education to arouse public interest in a magnificent scheme for a metropolitan park system. It has begun well by securing the creation of a Metropolitan Park Commission, which is studying the question. The success of the Association thus far is mainly due to Mr. Henry A. Barker, a young man of thorough preparation for this work, of great energy and a quiet determination.

The Providence Chamber of Commerce, though not strictly a civic organization, yet has interested itself in works of public improvement, especially in a plan for a system of public docks along our great river fronts.

KANSAS CITY

1. COMMERCIAL CLUB.
2. CIVIC LEAGUE,

By the HON. HENRY L. McCUNE, Kansas City, Mo.

Kansas City's two most important civic organizations are the Commercial Club and the Civic League. The former is primarily a commercial body, but has done so much for the cause of good government and for the improvement of civic conditions that it is clearly entitled to be classed as Kansas City's foremost civic organization. Organized in 1888, it has steadily grown in influence and prestige. Its membership is made up of heads of business houses and of professional men. Its motto is "Make Kansas City a good place to live in"; and its members are working steadily and effectively to this end. The Commercial Club works through committees. Its committee on state and national legislation considers and investigates all matters of state and national legislation likely to affect the city or its tributary territory. Its committee on municipal affairs studies and often originates measures calculated to improve civic conditions. These committees make reports to the club, where final and appropriate action is taken. The Commercial Club meets regularly every Tuesday night. It has handsome and commodious quarters, and the leading citizens of the city

¹⁰ This is the Senate in which little towns of six hundred and eight hundred people have the same representation as the city of Providence, with one hundred and seventy-five thousand.

are regular attendants at its meetings. Among the many things the Commercial Club has advocated and helped to bring about may be mentioned municipal ownership of the water works, the granting of a franchise to the gas company, under which the price of gas was reduced one-third; the building of Kansas City's splendid system of parks and boulevards; the voting of bonds which has provided funds for the building of the public library, manual training school, city hospital, the improvement of the water works and the erection of Convention Hall. It has advocated civil service in all the administrative departments of the city government, and has helped to create a sentiment in favor of the new charter which has just been prepared and will shortly be submitted to the voters of the city for adoption. The influence of the Commercial Club over its members has been very marked, and through them it has been able to create broader and higher conceptions of the duties of citizenship in the community.

It has always been the policy of the Commercial Club to refuse the consideration of political questions. Its work has been on broad lines and its discussions and activities have been confined to questions entirely free of political or partisan savor. The adherence to this policy has undoubtedly been wise for this body, organized, as it is, not only for civic, but also for commercial and business purposes. But the inability of the Commercial Club to take hold of matters of great concern to the city, because advocated or opposed by one or the other of the political parties, has led to a realization of the need of an organization formed especially for this purpose—an organization to work for the nomination and election of worthy and competent men to local public office—a non-partisan organization able to cast its influence for the election of the best man irrespective of party. The need of such a body led to the organization three years ago of the Kansas City Civic League. The League was incorporated with fifty of Kansas City's leading citizens as its first board of directors. It now has a membership of about eight hundred voters, and is a wideawake, aggressive organization, wielding a powerful influence in all city and county elections. The central idea of the League as organized was to elect honest and competent men to office in the city and county. To accomplish this it was decided to examine into the records and character of the men who were offered for public office and issue a report to the public on the qualifications of such candidates regardless of their party affiliations. The Executive Committee of the League, composed of nine men, were to manage this investigation and approve the report as published. To make the report on candidates as fair and impartial as possible, a sub-committee was appointed, consisting of six men, three Democrats and three Republicans, who should sit as a sort of court or jury to pass upon the fitness of candidates and formulate the report. This report was first submitted to the Executive Committee of the League, who approved and published it. The League has issued four of these reports to date, viz., in the city election of April, 1902; the county election of November, 1902; the city election of April, 1904, and the county election of November, 1904. It is also the purpose of the League to watch the conduct of public officials as such, and at the expiration of their

terms, before their successors are nominated, to issue another or preliminary report covering their records as officials. If their records have been good the League urges their renomination, and if bad, their retirement.

The local newspapers, on the whole, have been loyal to the purpose of the League. They have published its reports in full, and have written strong editorials commending its work. In the spring election of 1904 the League printed thirty thousand copies of its report in circular form, to be distributed among the voters, in addition to the publication in newspapers. Again, in the county election in November, 1904, it had forty thousand copies printed for circulation. This furnished the voters with the League's recommendations in convenient forms to take with them and use at the polls. The number of voters who took these reports to their voting places at the last city election and followed the League's recommendations from top to bottom, was generally commented on by the watchers at the polls. At the city election last spring the League attempted an innovation in the matter of securing a fair election. The presence on the registration books of the names of hundreds of deceased or fictitious persons had made it possible for persons so disposed to vote under these names, and this system of fraudulent voting had become so prevalent in certain wards as to make it possible to thus absolutely control the result of city elections.

At the spring election of 1904 the League secured about seventy-five good citizens, among them some of the most prominent business men of the city, who agreed to give election day to the work of the League. They were assigned work in the less reputable districts of the city, and given instructions what to do. They were to watch for fraud and to assist the officers in securing an honest and fair election. They went to the polls in these districts, and remained until the polls closed at night. Their very presence had a most wholesome effect, and the election was conceded to have been the fairest held in the city for a number of years. Practical politicians admitted that the influence of these men about the polls was a revelation. The same plan was pursued at the fall election of 1904, with equally satisfactory results. Shortly before the last election a number of public-spirited citizens raised a fund of about \$2,000, and placed it at the disposal of the League to be used in suppressing and prosecuting election frauds. Four attorneys, two Democrats and two Republicans, were appointed by the League to take charge of this work. They were paid liberal retaining fees, and authorized to employ detectives and incur other necessary expenses in carrying on the work. The fact that these preparations were being made to prevent fraud was given much publicity by the newspapers, and much crooked work was undoubtedly prevented by the fear of detection and punishment. Nevertheless over twenty arrests were made for fraudulent voting and fifteen cases are now pending in the Criminal Court.

Prior to the last election the Civic League, by invitation of the election commissioners, superintended the selection of the election judges and clerks for the next two years. This work, involving as it did an investigation of the character of about one thousand men, was carefully and conscientiously done, and as a result the present judges and clerks of election are made up of

a better class of men than heretofore. In addition to practical reform work the Civic League has done much to educate the people of the city in methods of improving the administration of the city's business. It has sent representatives regularly to the meetings of the National Municipal League and of the National Civil Service League. It has brought to Kansas City some of the best students of municipal affairs to deliver addresses. It has advocated the adoption of civil service in the different departments of the city government, and recently prepared a civil service amendment to the city charter. It has favored a better system of municipal bookkeeping and a new city charter. Its agitation of these matters has helped to bring about the preparation of the new city charter, which has just been formulated by the board of freeholders, and which will soon be submitted to the voters for acceptance. This charter, if adopted, will give Kansas City true civil service, will take the control of the dram shops out of the hands of the police commissioners, and will give the city a thoroughly modern organic law adequate for its needs.

On the whole, civic conditions in Kansas City are decidedly encouraging. Unusual interest is being taken by the people in the various municipal problems that confront a young and rapidly growing city. The honest and efficient administration of the city's business has become decidedly popular and our public servants are vying with each other in an endeavor to make their respective departments stand highest in point of efficiency. The credit for this condition is due in large measure to the work and influence of the Commercial Club and of the Civic League.

SEATTLE

1. CIVIC UNION.
2. LOCAL IMPROVEMENT CLUBS.

By PROF. J. ALLEN SMITH, Washington University, Seattle.

The people of Seattle have up to the present time been too busy grappling with the material problems of a new and rapidly growing community, and too much absorbed in money-making to take much interest in political reforms. A start has been made in this direction, however, by the organization of the Civic Union of Seattle, which has been in existence little more than a year. The object of this association, briefly stated, is to secure honesty and efficiency in municipal and county government. Its membership is something over three hundred, including business, professional and laboring men, the latter class being largely represented. The organization has been somewhat handicapped through the fact that some of its members appear to have no other interest in its work than the desire to render it ineffective. A board of trustees of fifty-one members elected by the Union for three years choose the president, secretary and executive committee, and have full charge of the work and affairs of the Union. There is also a large committee known as the Information Committee, selected by the

members of the Union, and representative of the various sections of the city. No officeholder or candidate for any municipal or county office can serve on any committee of the Union.

The management of the prosecuting attorney's office in this county has during the past two years been the object of frequent criticism. The prosecuting attorney was a candidate last summer for renomination at the hands of his party. The Civic Union inquired into the fitness of the various candidates who were seeking the nomination of the dominant party, and published in the papers a report giving the results of their investigation. The reasons were given why certain candidates (including the prosecuting attorney himself) should not be nominated, and the facts bearing upon the fitness of the others stated. It had the effect of compelling the nomination of one of the candidates approved by the Union. An efficient reform organization of this sort could have rendered valuable service in the cause of good government by making a searching inquiry into the record of the various candidates nominated by the two political parties and by informing the public of their fitness or unfitness. This, however, was not done.

Mention should be made of another class of organizations which have been a potent factor in bettering certain local conditions. These are the Local Improvement Clubs, of which Seattle has more than twenty, representing as many districts of the city. These clubs have been organized to secure through collective effort needed public improvements, better sanitary conditions and more attention to the aesthetic needs of the city. In matters of general interest they act together through a conference committee, and by co-operating in this way are able to exert a marked influence upon the policy of the city in these matters.

DULUTH

1. TAX PAYERS LEAGUE.
2. COMMERCIAL CLUB.

By W. G. JOERNS.

In the "boom" days of the eighties and early nineties, waste, extravagance and jobbery flourished, and by far the largest part of Duluth's present general bonded debt is referable to that period. Her citizens, in the main, were too busy in the mad chase after the almighty dollar, and too blind to measure duty and municipal misrule, to exercise that diligence and care upon which municipal welfare, in a democracy, must ultimately rest.

The business reaction which followed gave time for thought, and reflection developed the sore spots and the remedial wealth. The first civic society, at least in the city's later day, had its inception at that time. It was largely academic. It did some good in bringing together kindred spirits and in giving impetus to the development of the reform idea, and passed away. Several similar attempts along formal lines were made with no definite result.

Finally, in 1895, an organization called the "Tax Payers' League" was created, the membership, composed of citizens generally, contributing each a nominal sum. The work was done by an executive committee of seven public-spirited citizens and a secretary. It accomplished results the effect of which are apparent to this day, though there is room for the serious reflection whether, with the recurrence of at least each ten-year period, there ought not to be a renewal of similar activities. The Tax Payers' League gave a more prominent share of its attention to country affairs, but the reflex effect upon municipal administration was likewise wholesome. Its activity resulted in the uncovering of grave abuses, in remedial action, and led, after the League itself had ceased to exist as a militant body, to some criminal convictions. The most effective result of its operations lay in the publicity that its activity engendered. Turning from individual delinquency to the more insidious but also far more detrimental predatory acts of special interests, the League encountered fatal opposition, and its last patriotic endeavor was its undoing, though the good it did lived after it and grew with time.

At least one organization for alleged civic purposes was organized or attempted to be organized in Duluth since the day of the Tax Payers' League. No tangible evidence of its practical efficacy, however, came to light. At the present time organized effort at citizen control is confined to the activity of what is styled the "Public Affairs Committee" of the Duluth Commercial Club. This club has a membership of over 1,000, and represents very liberally the business and professional elements of the city. The club's activities cover a very wide field. The purpose of this Public Affairs Committee is to an important extent commercial and in the nature of an advertising bureau, and the composition of its membership, if open to criticism, might from some points of view be considered too "commercial" to do the very best work either as a guide for or supervisor of governmental action. Perhaps some of its conclusions on public questions may therefore lack that ultimate sanction which is more apt to be commanded by the more exclusive devotion and fitness for the special work. Be this as it may, however, this committee and the club back of it represent organization and the possibility of organized action, and to that extent must be reckoned with as a factor in shaping public opinion and official action.

But, more than upon any definite organization, Duluth may properly base her development along civic lines upon a well-defined and clear-sighted public spirit, which, in increasing volume, has characterized certain worthy elements of her population by no means confined to her so-called "business" or professional element. To these patriotic citizens and their watchfulness and intelligent activity, among other substantial reforms may be credited Duluth's successful activities in the operation of public utilities, the very satisfactory charter protection which the city enjoys under the beneficent constitutional provision in Minnesota for "home rule" charters, and, to an important extent, the quite wholesome general administration, regardless of partisan aspect, that has characterized the city proper for some years past.